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ABSTRACT

Vocational education programs in America's correctional institutions have been financially handicapped, since security demands the greatest portion of resource allocations. Four eras in the development of the correctional system are generally identified: era of punishment and retribution, era of restraint or reform, era of rehabilitation and treatment, and the emerging era of reintegration. Several models have been developed for providing vocational education to prison populations. Institutionally-based programs are of three types: correctional administrators and staff with sole control of program design, implementation, and evaluation; involvement of community members in curriculum design and instruction; and use of inmates for institutional maintenance or prison industries. In community-based programs inmates are released for training in a community facility. (Recent innovations are described.) Other innovations in corrections are the recently developed programs for female, juvenile, and mentally handicapped offenders. Rigorously designed research of program effectiveness is conspicuously absent. Before vocational education can successfully demonstrate its rehabilitative potential, its status must be improved, barriers to employment must be removed, and funding must be increased. National initiatives to improve vocational education's funding and status are standards and accreditation, Corrections Program in the Department of Education, and legislative initiatives. (YLB)

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Information Series No. 237

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN CORRECTIONS

written by

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FOREWORD

Vocational Education in Corrections reviews the history of corrections in America and places vocational education programming into that context. The authors suggest that while significant barriers to delivery of vocational education program services in correctional institutions exist, several developments at the national level hold out hope for improved future programs.

This paper is one of seven interpretive papers produced during the fourth year of the National Center's knowledge transformation program. The review and synthesis in each topic area is intended to communicate knowledge and suggest applications. Papers in the series should be of interest to all vocational educators including teachers, administrators, federal agency personnel, researchers, and the National Center staff.

The profession is indebted to Dr. Sherman Day and Mel McCane for their scholarship in preparing this paper. Dr. Brian Jones of the American Institutes for Research, Dr. Charles Whitson of Columbus, Ohio, and Roger Allton of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education contributed to the development of the paper through their critical review of the manuscript. Staff on the project included Alta Moser, Shelley Grieve, Raymond E. Harlan, Dr. Carol Kowle, Dr. Judith Samuelson, and Dr. Jay Smink. Editorial assistance was provided by Sharon L. Fain of the Field Services staff.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The provision of vocational education programs in the correctional institutions of the United States holds out the promise of rehabilitation for the inmates of those institutions. The overriding objective of protecting the public, however, demands a large majority of available resources. Budgetary constraints and the resulting overcrowded facilities contribute to the provision of less than optimal rehabilitation services.

Several innovations in programming appear to be promising alternatives to the traditional vocational education offerings of correctional institutions. Such programs use community resources in offering expanded and enriched learning experiences.

A number of national efforts have recently focused attention on the need for adequate vocational education programs in correctional institutions. A need for accountability by states in their provision of these vocational education services also has been emphasized. These efforts have spurred new optimism that high-quality vocational education programming for incarcerated individuals may become a reality.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational education programs in America's correctional institutions reflect the diversity found among those institutions. They also mirror the goal ambiguity that exists in correctional philosophy. While rehabilitation is the espoused objective of incarceration, resource allocations for programming reveal greater apparent commitments to protecting the public from convicted offenders and to maintaining order within correctional institutions.

Testimony at hearings on vocational education in corrections reveals that in 1979 only 1.5 percent of the total cost of incarceration went for vocational education programs (National Advisory Council 1981). It has been suggested that security will always take priority over rehabilitation (Day 1979). Kwartler (1974) maintains that this is rightly so and that corrections officials should not revise their priorities.

It is a mistake to conclude that corrections officials do not recognize the need for and the value of vocational education (Bell et al. 1977b). Conflicting expectations, however, create a dilemma for these administrators; they are charged with protecting society by isolating criminals and at the same time with rehabilitating offenders so that they can function in society (Morris and Jacobs 1974).

While debates about policies and procedures persist, America's correctional institutions continue to house about 350,000 convicted criminals, most of whom are poorly equipped to function in society.

An abundance of statistics describing typical offenders reveals a picture of an impoverished population. Some facts about inmates are the following:

- Thirty-four percent of the juvenile and 20 percent of the adult inmate population in correctional institutions are functionally illiterate. They are unable to complete a job application, read and understand newspapers, or apply for an automobile operator's license (American Bar Association 1975).
- Sixty-six percent of adult offenders in institutions have no high school diploma (Bell et al. 1977b).
- Seventy percent of the inmate population have had no previous vocational training (Comptroller General 1979).
- Forty percent of all inmates were unemployed prior to their current conviction (National Advisory Council 1981).
- The typical inmate is a male who is poor, has less than ten years of schooling, and functions from two to three years below that level (National Advisory Council 1981).

The need for expanded educational programming is clear. Ninety-five percent of convicted felons eventually return to society. The consequences of failing to provide them with marketable skills are no secret and have been documented by The Education Commission of the States in a 1976 report that says, "it is obvious that to the extent that offenders cannot use knowledge and skills obtained from the normal culture to cope with normal society, they will use knowledge and skills obtained from deviant cultures to cope in whatever way they can" (p. 4).

Extensive support exists for the view that educational programs, including vocational education, can, when given adequate resources, rehabilitate many of these offenders and enhance their employability and self-sufficiency (National Advisory Council 1981). An influential advocate of educational programs as a means of rehabilitating (or perhaps, more appropriately, habilitating) convicted offenders is the Chief Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court, Warren E. Burger.

Chief Justice Burger (1981) suggests that in an ideal program we would "make certain that every inmate who cannot read, write, spell and do simple arithmetic would be given training . . ." (p. 6). This program, says Burger, "would require a large expansion of vocational training in the skilled and semi-skilled crafts. The objectives would be that a prisoner would not leave the institution without some qualifications for employment in the construction, manufacturing, or service industries . . . . We should help them *learn* their way out of prison" (emphasis added) (p. 6).

The ability of correctional institutions to respond to the appeal for expanded educational offerings is restricted by budgetary constraints that, as can be expected, result in facility and staff limitations. Social and economic changes of the past decade have exacerbated these problems.

As inflation has increased the costs of all goods and services, the same economic conditions that have led to inflation have further limited the job opportunities of unskilled workers. Increasing crime rates and resultant overcrowding of correctional institutions have placed greater demands on institutions already struggling to maintain programs at existing levels.

Overcrowding of correctional facilities has become particularly severe in the last decade. Between 1971 and 1978 prison populations increased by over 50 percent (*Sourcebook* 1981). A recently released Justice Department report indicates that more newly convicted criminals were incarcerated in the first six months of 1981 than in all of 1980 (U. S. Department of Justice 1981b).

Experts have suggested that in 1980 prison populations exceeded the ability of institutions to provide safe and humane conditions by over 50 percent (Trippett 1980). Overcrowded conditions have been cited as being partially responsible for major disturbances in at least ten states, including New Mexico where riots claimed over thirty lives (Christianson and Korn 1981).

Twenty-five states have been ordered by federal courts to bring correctional institutions up to standards for safe and humane conditions ("Legal Challenges" 1981), these orders having resulted from challenges to overcrowding by prisoners. Eighteen states have at least one institution operating under such court orders.

Some new institutions have been constructed, some are being built, and others are planned. However, in most cases these facilities will not replace the 80- to 100-year-old maximum security facilities that, according to Silberman (1978) house more than two-thirds of inmates in maximum security institutions. New facilities are quickly being filled as newly convicted offenders are incarcerated.

Against this background, the remainder of this work will recount the history of corrections and related vocational education programs, review the present status of these programs, and discuss possible futures for vocational education in corrections.

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF CORRECTIONS

The need for reform has been a recurrent theme throughout the history of corrections. Silberman (1978) has noted that except for one brief period around the turn of the nineteenth century, "there has never been a time when the correctional system did not appear to be in need of rapid and substantial change." Underlying this need for reform has been widespread uncertainty and philosophical disagreement regarding the purpose and goals of imprisonment.

Such disagreement over the goals of imprisonment bears strongly on the provision of vocational training, which is not a constitutional right, but is rather a privilege afforded to inmates by local, state, and federal governments (Rudousky, Bornstein, and Koren 1977). Therefore, it is important to explore the range of philosophical arguments and their historical contexts in order to determine a rationale for providing vocational training in correctional settings.

Scholars have generally identified four eras in the development of the correctional system in the United States (Barnes and Teeters 1959; McKelvey 1972; Rothman 1980; Tappan 1960). These include the era of punishment and retribution, the era of restraint or reform, the era of rehabilitation and treatment, and the emerging era of reintegration.

The Era of Punishment and Retribution

Historically, houses of corrections or "debtors' prisons," as they were sometimes called, had little connection with either crime or criminals. Rather, correctional institutions were associated more with welfare and the economics of labor than with the administration of justice (Nagel 1973).

In Europe, prior to and during the seventeenth century, correctional institutions were used to teach poor citizens useful skills and to punish beggars, tramps, and prostitutes. Criminals and poor citizens were confined side by side, in part to minimize the potential for revolt. At that time, however, criminals were confined primarily on a pretrial basis. After their trial, those who were found guilty suffered corporal punishment. Thieves were either executed or transferred to the colonies (Franks 1979).

The concept upon which this system was based was the need for punishment and retribution. This philosophy was the dominant force in the construction and operation of jails and prisons in this country before the end of the eighteenth century. Cressey (1965) describes this era as follows:

> Administrators were often expected to inflict pain on prisoners while at the same time deprive them of their freedom. In the extreme, prisoners were required to walk treadmills, turn cranks, carry a cannonball for prescribed periods, and to perform other painful tasks . . . . Few opportunities for diversions such as participation in religious services were provided, presumably on the grounds that this would mitigate the conditions of suffering which the criminal was thought to both deserve and need. (p. 1027)

Implicit in the notion of punishment and retribution was the idea that the punishment deterred others from commiting crimes. Thus, deterring crime and meting out punishment and retribution were major goals of American corrections. With the growing emphasis on constitutional law, however, prison philosophy and institutional practices began to change.

The Era of Restraint and Reform

The second era in the history of the American correctional system is referred to as the era of restraint (Feldman 1974; Nagel 1973) or reform (Cressey 1965; Davis 1978). During this era, the whip and stockades were replaced by "hard labor." Exploitation of prisoners resulted. Reid (1976) notes that they were often treated like slaves. Work was contracted with private industry and other governmental agencies, and was assigned as punishment for inmates. This helped to defray the expenses of incarceration.

During the era of restraint, however, reform began, including the introduction of academic and vocational training. Under the influence of Quaker theology, the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons was formed, and in 1778 the first prison school in America was established at the Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia (Barnes and Teeters 1959). In addition to basic academic training, inmates at this institution were also provided with opportunities for learning various skills, including tailoring, weaving, and shoemaking (McKelvey 1972).

In 1825, the Boston Prison Discipline Society added academic instruction to religious training. In Maryland, formally sanctioned and state-supported academic and training programs were introduced in the 1830s (Tappan 1960).

One of the first comprehensive educational programs in corrections was begun at the Detroit House of Corrections. By 1870, nearly two-thirds of the 335 inmates at the facility were engaged in academic and/or vocational training classes. However, as Martin (1976) noted, "this was undoubtedly an exception to a national pattern in 1870 in which only 8,000 of some 20,000 illiterate prisoners were receiving some form of instruction" (p. 38).

While little is known about the quality and effectiveness of these programs, their existence represented a substantial change in the treatment of offenders. While reforms were primarily aimed toward the youthful offenders, they were later extended to include adult offenders as well.

In 1870, the isolated and fragmented changes in the earlier part of the century became the subject of a national convention for prison reform. The National Congress of Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline, or the "Cincinnati Congress," as it has come to be known, was convened in 1870 to develop strategies to relieve severe prison overcrowding and to chart a course for the future of prison construction and programmatic reform (Allen and Simonsen 1978; Jarvis 1978).

The results of this gathering of leading correctional officials and theoreticians from the United States, Canada, and South America were significant in several major respects. The Declaration of Principles that emerged provided national unity and direction for prison reform. A philosophy that affirmed the need for both religious and secular education and training was adapted.

The congress also advocated national acceptance of the European idea of indeterminant sentencing. As the necessary condition for release from prison, prisoners were expected to demonstrate the ability and motivation to assume a law abiding role in society through work in prison industry programs (Walker 1980).

Authority to grant releases to prisoners was vested in a board of guardians who also monitored the conduct of former prisoners, thereby facilitating a successful transition from prison life to the open society (Allen and Simonsen 1978; Barnes and Teeters 1959). This practice represented the beginning of the parole system, which has become firmly entrenched in the criminal justice system at both the state and federal levels.

Leading the way in the implementation of this new philosophy was the noted prison reformer Zebulen Brockway. Brockway, who had administered the Detroit program during the 1860s, accepted the post of superintendent at Elmira Reformatory, where he successfully put the philosophy of the Cincinnati Congress into practice. Brockway drew on the resources of Elmira College to establish a comprehensive educational program. Academic courses were offered in basic literacy, science, math, geology, psychology, and other subjects. Vocational skill development classes included those in tailoring, printing, and plumbing (Roberts 1971). Unfortunately, the comprehensive educational program at the Elmira facility proved to be the exception rather than the rule in prison operations.

Nearly sixty years after the Cincinnati Congress, Austin H. MacCormick was engaged by the Carnegie Corporation to assess the quality and scope of educational programs in American prisons. After visits to sixty of the nation's sixty-four federal and state institutions, MacCormick (1931) concluded that while a few reformatories had established well-balanced and effective vocational training programs, no prison in the country had a program of vocational education worthy of the name. Further, MacCormick observed that no prison had been successful in organizing industrial or maintenance programs to provide viable vocational training.

Among the major barriers to effective delivery of vocational education MacCormick noted were the following:

- Vocational training failed to take into account individual analysis and guidance of the inmates.
- Skilled trades were emphasized to the exclusion of other occupations.
- Vocational training was often provided in obsolete or vanishing trades.
- Equipment was meager and outdated.
- Trade instructors were frequently incompetent.
- Emphasis was placed on routine drills rather than on participation in practical work experiences.
- Prison industries were substandard.
- There was little match between theoretical instruction and practical application.
- Programs for women emphasized homemaking only.

Many of MacCormick's observations regarding vocational education in corrections during the 1920s and 1930s are apparently still true today.

The Era of Rehabilitation

The era of rehabilitation emerged gradually during the early part of the twentieth century. This era was marked by advances in the social and behavioral sciences. Psychologists advocated individual diagnosis and treatment of offenders, while sociologists maintained that the causes of crime resided in the interaction between individual personalities and the social environment (Walker 1980).

These views were expressed by the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement (referred to as the Wickersham Commission), which was assembled by Executive Order of the President in 1929. The Wickersham Commission issued a series of fourteen reports in 1931, covering the spectrum of criminal justice in the United States (Barnes and Teeters 1959; Jarvis 1978). While they reiterated the Declaration of Principles issued by the Cincinnati Congress in 1870, the reports drew heavily upon social research justifying the expanded use of probation and parole. Members of the Wickersham Commission also supported the use of diagnosis and treatment.

Since the time of the Wickersham Commission several reforms have taken place in the prison system. Some of these have dealt specifically with vocational education. Major developments have included the following:

- The establishment in 1930 of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, which has served as a model service delivery system for many states.
- Increased aid from the U.S. Department of Education to improve vocational training programs and support services under such legislation as the Adult Education Act (P.L. 91-230), Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (P.L. 94-483), and the Library Services and Construction Act (P.L. 91-600).
- Increased federal aid in the form of monies and technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- The organization and development of the International Correctional Education Association, an affiliate of the American Correctional Association.
- The development of minimum standards for correctional education by several groups, including the American Correctional Association (Commission on Accreditation 1977) and the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (Abram and Schroeder 1977).
- Increased court intervention in the correctional system (Rudousky, Bronstein, and Koren 1977).

These developments have had a significant impact on vocational education in correctional settings. Nevertheless, dissatisfaction with the notion of rehabilitation has created controversy among experts in the field of corrections. Some writers have questioned whether punishment and rehabilitation can be simultaneously accomplished (Cressey 1965; Feldman 1974). Evaluators of various treatment programs, including vocational education (Bailey 1970; Lipton, Martinson, and Wilks 1975; Martinson 1974), have challenged prison administrators to prove that rehabilitation programs deter recidivism (repeated conviction or parole revocation). Other writers (Nagel 1973; Rothman 1980) have questioned the efficacy of a prison philosophy based on the assumption that inmates are patients whose symptoms can be diagnosed and treated and cured as the so called medieval model of rehabilitation implies.

The Emerging Era of Reintegration

According to Allen and Simonsen (1978), efforts to rehabilitate offenders have little chance for success unless they are linked to the offender's home communities. The concept of reintegration is based on the belief that there is a need for a gradual release of prisoners from extended periods of incarceration through such means as transition centers, halfway houses, work furlough programs, and educational release projects. These alternative strategies received the endorsement of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice in 1967. The commission's final report said in part:

> The general underlying premise for the new directions in corrections is that crime and deliquency are symptoms of failures and disorganization of the community as well as individual offenders. . . . The task of corrections, therefore, includes rebuilding solid ties between the offender and the community, integrating or reintegrating the offender into community life—restoring family ties, obtaining employment and education, securing in the larger sense a place for the offender in the routine functioning of society. (p. 7)

The philosophy of reintegration puts the focus of correctional programs on efforts to equip offenders with the academic, vocational, and social skills necessary to allow them to secure employment and become self-supporting. The philosophy advocates skill development programs in offenders' home communities, thereby facilitating community participation in the planning and implementation of correctional programs. Jones (1977) contends that the notion of reintegration provides a rationale for vocational education programs in corrections, i.e., that offenders must adjust to society.

Summary

Rothman (1973) has observed that in spite of the rhetoric of reform, little real change has occurred in the correctional system. Each generation of reformers seems to echo its predecessor. A comparison of the proceedings of the Cincinnati Congress, held in 1870, the Wickersham Commission, convened in 1931, and the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, assembled in 1967, reveals quite similar rhetoric. The proceedings have in common an appeal for a more humane prison environment with opportunities for self-improvement for inmates; expanded cooperation and coordination among prisons, inmates, and communities; and increased alternatives to incarceration.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN CORRECTIONS

The National Advisory Council on Vocational Education (1981) uses the following definition of vocational education in corrections:

> Vocational education in corrections can be broadly defined as instruction offered within correctional systems to enable offenders to be employment ready upon their return to free society. It involves the development of basic skills, specific occupational training, and an array of "job readiness" training, including the development of motivation, good work habits, and survival skills.

Utilizing this definition of vocational education, several models have been developed for providing vocational education to prison populations. To date, no systematic classification of these models appears in the literature. The literature does suggest, however, that these programs can be generally characterized as either institutionally based or community-based. In addition, a number of programs have been designed for special populations of offenders, including females, juveniles, and mentally handicapped persons. Several major efforts to evaluate vocational programs in correctional institutions have been completed. The results of these evaluations have influenced program development.

Institutionally Based and Community-based Programs

Institutionally Based Programs

Most vocational programs for incarcerated offenders are institutionally based. In 1977, Abram and Schroeder estimated that approximately twenty-five thousand adult inmates were enrolled in vocational education programs in 145 subject areas. About seven thousand additional inmates were on class waiting lists. In addition, nearly eight thousand juvenile offenders were enrolled in vocational education, with over one thousand on waiting lists.

In most institutionally based programs, correctional administrators and staff are solely responsible for program design, implementation, and evaluation. Funding has come from a variety of sources, including institutional budgets, CETA, and grants from state departments of education. The program administrators and teachers are usually hired and evaluated by an institutional administrator.

A second type of institutionally based program that has recently emerged involves community members in both curriculum design and instruction. By drawing on such community resources as staff of local community colleges and vocational trade schools, corrections officials are able to increase programs' eligibility for funding, improve their ability to meet state, regional, or national accreditation standards, and obtain more highly qualified instructors. This pattern of service delivery facilitates the certification of training for inmates who successfully complete the program.

By using instructors from local educational institutions, administrators provide training that more closely resembles vocational education programs in the community. Offenders who are

released before completing their vocational programs may have an opportunity to complete the program in the community. Funding to support the use of community resources is usually provided by a grant from the correctional agency or the federal government.

The third type of institutionally based program is designed to provide workers for the maintenance of the institution or for prison industries. The use of inmates for institutional maintenance has been justified historically by the need to reduce both idleness and the costs of incarceration. Prison industries were created to offset the high costs of institutional operations, provide training for inmates, and give inmates the opportunity to earn money while incarcerated.

Inmates involved in this approach to vocational training can and do acquire job-related skills. Recent efforts to evaluate the actual value of such programs to inmates, however, determined that the marketability of acquired skills has been overestimated. Many such vocational education programs provide little opportunity for acquiring job training that can be used after release from prison (Comptroller General 1979). The limited market for goods produced in correctional industries renders the skills obtained of little value to inmates returning to the community.

Prison industries often compete with formal vocational education programs for inmate participation and typically have higher participation rates because they offer payment for the inmate services (National Advisory Council 1981). Inmates trade the long-term advantage of employability for the immediate advantage of an income.

Free Venture Project. According to Day (1979), the concept of combining realistic work opportunities with useful skill training has not been fully implemented in corrections. A recent effort to tap the potential of this concept is called the Free Venture Project. This project, supported by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, was developed in 1975 to provide correctional administrators with a prototype for developing vocational education programs in conjunction with prison industries.

The Free Venture Project requires that representatives of industry be involved in the planning and implementation of the institutional industrial program. The project also requires that market surveys be conducted as a part of the planning process, equipment and training be comparable to that in industry, and job placement services be provided to offenders returning to the community. The program must replicate the community work environment as closely as possible.

Seven states were authorized to pilot test the program under the Justice System Improvement Act of 1979. These states have met with varying degrees of success in implementation. The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration has recently recognized the states of Arizona, Kansas, and Minnesota for demonstrating their ability to develop realistic work environments in their correctional systems while enabling prisoners to support themselves ("LEAA Helps Prison Industries" 1981).

The Somers Correctional Institution in Connecticut has been identified as having one of the most successful vocational education programs in the country (Rice et al. 1980). Rice and his associates found the Somers program, one of the Free Venture pilot-test sites, to be highly successful in improving student grades and motivation, coordination with prison industries, and delivery of vocational education services. In addition, the program was successful in placing 75 percent of the inmate graduates in employment upon release from prison.

A recent development resulting from the success of the Free Venture Project is the proposal of federal legislation to create a Corporation for Prison Industries (Senate Bill 1597). This is a program for introducing private sector expertise into work programs and allowing the products

from prison industries to be sold in interstate commerce. The proposed act would establish a nonprofit organization (not an agency of the federal government) with the power to make loans and grants and enter into contracts with all credible industries, businesses, agencies, and institutions working to establish joint prison-industry activities.

These efforts to simulate realistic conditions in prison industries have encountered problems. One hurdle is the requirement that endorsement be obtained from industry and unions. Another is the reluctance of some prison administrators to accept a program that reduces their authority and control (Parker 1978). In spite of these obstacles, the approach holds apparent promise.

School district concept. Another encouraging effort to improve delivery of educational and vocational services to inmates is the establishment of correctional school districts. Under this arrangement, instructional services are designed and administered through collaborative agreements between correctional institutions and state education agencies (SEAs) and/or local education agencies (LEAs). Such agreements presently exist in eight states.

The correctional school district concept eliminates several of the ten barriers to the delivery of vocational education in corrections identified in National Advisory Council on Vocational Education (1981) hearings. Correctional institutions normally experience difficulty in obtaining state and federal funds to upgrade educational programs. Access to these funds is greatly enhanced when correctional insitutions, through the school district approach, are designated local education agencies (LEAs). Additional advantages of this approach include: the provision of access to state advisory councils on vocational education, the opportunity to meet the standards of state and regional accrediting agencies, the licensing of administrators and institutions, and the placing of responsibility for the evaluation of programs with the state education agency. The American Bar Association (Commission on Correctional Facilities 1973) has affirmed the potential for such benefits.

The longest operating correctional school district is the Windham School District in the Texas Department of Corrections (Windham 1974). Murray (1975) evaluated the progress of this district after five years of operation and found that funding had increased 1,000 percent, space for programs had doubled, and instructional personnel had increased tenfold. The Windham School District also obtained state and regional accreditation during this time.

Implementation of the school district concept varies from state to state (McCollum 1973; Reagen et al. 1976). Coordination of the program in Texas is shared by the department of corrections and the department of education. In Florida, cooperative agreements are made between local education agencies and the institutions within their boundaries. Adult and juvenile institutions in Virginia are under the jurisdiction of the Rehabilitation School Authority, which operates independently of the prison system. Staff responsibilities also differ in various states. Some state correctional school district staffs report directly to the institutional administration, while others report to either the state or local education agency.

Many vocational educators are optimistic about the potential benefits of the school district concept. Testimony at the National Advisory Council hearings indicated that educators believe this organizational design has advantages over traditional models (National Advisory Council 1981). Unfortunately, the effectiveness of this approach has not been documented despite the recommendations of virtually every major study in this area (Bell et al. 1977b; Education Commission of the States 1976; Meta Metrics 1977; National Advisory Council 1981).

Other innovations. Another promising institutionally based program is the Vienna Correctional Center in Illinois. This institution has become an educational center, serving both

inmates and community members (Black 1980). One hundred residents are enrolled in programs at the institution. One outcome of this cooperative relationship is the development of several internship programs for both inmates and residents, such as the Emergency Medical Technician for Ambulance Service Training Program. A multicounty ambulance service has been established on institutional grounds. Both inmates and community residents report satisfaction with the Vienna program.

A similar, though somewhat smaller, program operates at the Alto Correctional Institution in Georgia. Inmates are trained in fire fighting techniques and operate the emergency fire station for the community.

Another innovative vocational education program was developed at the Walpole Correctional Facility in Massachusetts. The Honeywell Corporation began donating technical assistance and equipment to the Massachusetts Department of Corrections in 1967 for the establishment of a computer programming course. The program is self-perpetuating and leads directly to employment (Full 1978). Inmates who pass the course taught by Honeywell employees become instructors for a new group of trainees, at the same time advancing to the next level course.

The Walpole experiment has been successful, and the program has been expanded to other facilities within the Massachusetts correctional system. The Honeywell Corporation has continued to upgrade both the quality of equipment and skill training. Courses in programming, keypunching, computer operations, and computer maintenance have been added. Although the program has not been formally evaluated, Honeywell officials estimate that of the 350 inmates who have been trained and released from prison, fewer than 30 percent have been returned. In addition, inmates formed a partnership called Con-puter Systems Programming that provides services at no charge to various government organizations. The Massachusetts legislature enacted a law in 1976 to permit this arrangement (Full 1978).

The recent efforts to involve state departments of education, local education agencies, and private enterprise in the design, implementation, and evaluation of vocational education programs in correctional agencies have spurred optimism about the future. Formalized cooperative agreements lead to more efficient use of funds, facilities, and personnel, resulting in improved vocational education for inmates (National Advisory Council 1981).

Community-based Programs

Although less common than institutionally based programs, community-based vocational programs for offenders represent a significant, recent innovation. In a community-based program, inmates are released from the institution for a portion of the day to obtain on-the-job or job-related training in a community facility.

Work-release programs. Work-release programs were regarded as the most promising reform in corrections during the early 1970s. It was anticipated that 50 to 80 percent of inmates would be eligible for these programs. However, Potter (1979) observed that "except in a handful of states, work-release has never really caught on . . . seldom are more than 10 percent of a state's inmates involved in work-release programs. Most often, the proportion is 1 or 2 percent" (p. 6l).

The expansion of work-release programs was curtailed by public resentment over the presence of sentenced offenders in the community. A few instances of inmates escaping from the program or committing additional offenses while released intensified public dissatisfaction with the program.

One successful work-release program, however, has been recognized by the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. This is the Montgomery County Work Release/Prerelease program in Rockville, Maryland. The Montgomery County program offers an array of services to inmates, including employment assistance, counseling, social awareness training, and placement in therapy and education programs. Fewer than 5 percent of the inmates have attempted escapes from this program and the recidivism rate is less than 12 percent (Rosenblum and Whitcomb 1978).

Little information is available on the comparative effectiveness of work-release programs in terms of skill acquisition, program costs, or recidivism.

Halfway house programs. The purpose of halfway houses is to provide inmates with a gradual transition from institutional life to society. These programs give inmates an opportunity to gain on-the-job training while residing in minimum security institutions located in the community. An inmate is usually eligible for placement in a halfway house within six months of release or when serving a sentence of less than one year.

Most halfway house programs are operated by private agencies and social service organizations, such as the Salvation Army and Volunteers of America. Typically, federal and state correctional agencies contract with these organizations for lodging, supervision, and placement services.

Blackmore (1980) estimates that approximately 2,200 prerelease or halfway houses are in operation in the United States, 600 of which house adult programs. These centers house from thirty to forty thousand offenders. Fifty-one percent of all federal prisoners are released to halfway house programs. These offenders experience lower unemployment rates, better job attendance records, and higher earnings than do inmates released from institutions directly to society (Beck 1981).

Summary

Vocational education has traditionally been offered to inmates of correctional institutions either through classroom programs or through prison industry or maintenance programs. Evaluations of these programs indicate that with few exceptions, they have not provided either the formal training or on-the-job training essential to improve the employability of inmates upon release (Bell et al. 1977b; Comptroller General 1979; Education Commission of the States 1976).

Recent innovations, such as the Free Venture Project, correctional school districts, and cooperative community programs are promising alternatives. Because of the recency of these innovations, evaluation data are not available. However, most correctional educators are enthusiastic about the potential of these developments.

Community-based programs such as work-release and halfway house programs are also viewed as promising alternatives to the institutionally based programs. These programs have not expanded as rapidly as anticipated nor have they been shown to be superior to institutionally based programs. Expansion of these programs depends largely on whether the public will tolerate the presence of convicted offenders in the community, and whether corrections officials, legislators, and judges perceive the increased use of work-release and halfway house programs as a partial solution to overcrowding problems in institutions.

Programs for Special Populations

Other innovations in corrections are the recently developed programs for female, juvenile, and mentally handicapped offenders.

Female Offenders

Until recently, few programs for female offenders were described in the literature. Due to the larger numbers of males incarcerated, the resources of state and federal correctional systems have gone into facilities and programs for males. In the last decade, however, the number of convictions of women has increased substantially. The states were generally unprepared to deal with these larger numbers.

A significant contribution to the literature about the need for programs for females is the report by Glick and Neto (1977) entitled *A National Study of Women's Correctional Programs*. This is a comprehensive attempt to profile the typical female inmate and identify existing levels of institutional and community-based services. Some facts about female offenders follow:

- Sixty-seven percent of the women in prison are under age thirty.
- Incarcerated women typically have blue-collar backgrounds. Most are receiving public welfare payments.
- The majority of female prisoners are black. Most lack marketable skills.
- Most are single heads of a household.
- Almost all female offenders have erratic employment records.

There is a paucity of data on which to base effective vocational programming for the rehabilitation of female offenders. The special concern for the female offender, accentuated by the social consciousness of the women's movement, has not resulted in major changes in correctional programs. Nevertheless, the women's movement has focused attention on the discrepancy between rehabilitative services provided for men and those provided for women in prison (Grogan 1975).

Social stereotyping has shaped institutional attitudes, practices, and programs for women. This is demonstrated in a comment by Eyman (1971), "with role confused women in prison from having come in conflict with authority, it is important to reshape their self-concept in order that they may reidentify themselves with the feminine role" (p. 33). Glick and Neto (1977) suggest that curriculum developers must focus on the female offender as a woman and provide for the needs of women after they leave the institution.

Vocational programs for women frequently include courses in garment manufacturing, cosmetology, clerical work, and cooking. Lehman (1977) notes that just as public schools have placed students in classes on the basis of their sex and utilized sex-sterotyped curricula, correctional institutions have perpetuated inequities in the education and training of women. Lehman further describes the attitude that has resulted in these inequities:

> Most of the programs for women are built on the false assumption that a woman will never have to, or never want to earn a living . . . in the correctional system this pattern is repeated and certain vocational education courses are deemed appropriate for a person by sex rather than ability . . . these biases are perpetuated by rehabilitation programs which are still trying to sell the same message which shortchanged women in the first place. Work is not temporary until one marries. (p. 32)

In addition to the stereotyping problem, several other barriers to the design of effective vocational education programs for female offenders have been identified (Cronin, Whitson, Reinhart, and Keith 1976). These include shorter average sentences and the use of women in institutional maintenance.

Several serious efforts to improve vocational education for women are being developed in response to the growing awareness of the needs of female offenders. A number of states have begun offering nonstereotypical programs for women. Some of these programs have been developed for men and women jointly in order to maximize limited resources while providing for the needs of both sexes.

The state of Georgia, for example, has recently implemented a coeducational program in women's institutions making training available in plumbing, carpentry, electronics, and drafting. Florida's Broward Correctional Institute offers the opportunity for women to study optical lab training, cabinet making, and radio and television repair. The Florida Correctional Institution at Lowell offers a course in small engine repair. The state of South Carolina offers a welding course in women's institutions, and the California Department of Corrections has recently released plans to offer female offenders several nontraditional courses.

Apprenticeship training programs have been initiated at federal and some state correctional facilities for women. This effort began in 1978 when an informal committee composed of representatives of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, the Bureau of Prisons, and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training gathered to explore the feasibility of starting apprenticeship programs for women in state correctional institutions. Apprenticeship programs have been developed in such nontraditional occupations as painting, plumbing, auto mechanics, powerhouse operation, electrical work, and bricklaying.

Special efforts are needed to develop meaningful vocational programs for women. The lack of monetary support from correctional agencies continues to be a major deterrent for many specialized vocational education programs for females. A key to program success may lie in cooperation with unions and potential employers.

Juvenile Offenders

Juvenile correctional facilities have a history of being treatment oriented. The purpose of incarcerating young offenders has long been rehabilitation. As early as the turn of the century, the courts were sentencing youthful offenders for rehabilitation rather than punishment (Silberman 1978).

Unlike the houses of refuge of the 1830s and the reformatories of the 1880s, juvenile institutions were usually described as training schools, industrial schools, or boys' schools. Clearly, as these names suggest, education occupied a central role. As Rothman (1980) notes:

> Progressives believed that a well-planned school program would assure rehabilitation. In good Deweyite fashion, the curriculum was to include a School of Letters, providing academic instruction, and still more important, a School of Vocational Training, in which highly qualified experts in their several lines would fit inmates to the industrial trades and to farming and gardening, according to their desires, ability and probable future. (p. 264)

Unfortunately, studies of vocational education programs in juvenile institutions have repeatedly demonstrated that incarceration has not succeeded in rehabilitating youth. While stated goals emphasize education, practice does not. MacCormick (Rothman 1980), after reviewing vocational education programs for boys in juvenile corrections, concluded that institutions emphasize control and regimentation rather than education (including vocational education).

In their five year follow-up study of 1,000 juvenile offenders, Glueck and Glueck (1965) found that almost 90 percent had been returned to institutions following their release. Evaluations of institutional programs suggest that one reason for the high number of returning offenders may be a lack of educational and vocational education services.

Ronald Nuttall (1977) investigated vocational training for juveniles incarcerated in the state of Massachusetts. In addition to surveying inmates and juvenile corrections administrators, Nuttall also surveyed a total of 980 employers throughout the state. Based upon the combined survey data and on site evaluations, the author found a lack of appropriate education programs for division of youth service inmates, a lack of prevocational preparation such as work readiness and career exploration, little emphasis on the vocational needs of youth as a criteria for program assignment, and age restrictions that prohibited job placement in areas for which extensive training was being provided.

Abram and Schroeder (1977) surveyed 95 juvenile correctional facilities housing almost 21,000 offenders. They found that only about one-third of the juveniles in these institutions were enrolled in vocational education programs. An additional 1,200 juveniles were found to be on waiting lists. Entry into vocational programs was typically based on a combination of inmate requests, test results, and staff recommendations. Minimum performance standards for enrollment in vocational education programs were based on achievement level, aptitude, and I.Q. test scores. Because of a lack of aptitude or interest and the lack of program openings, 41 percent of all the inmates surveyed did not participate in vocational education. Of the institutions surveyed, 52 to 58 percent indicated the following reasons for the lack of participation in vocational education programs: failure to meet entry requirements, lack of program openings, and short-term sentences.

An assessment of vocational education programs in seven southeastern states (Rice et al. 1978) revealed that only 42 percent of the incarcerated juveniles were enrolled in some sort of vocational education. Due to juveniles' relatively short length of stay in correctional settings, such programs as did exist focused on career exploration only.

The barriers to the development of effective programs were noted as inadequately defined goals, inadequate coordination with other components (i.e., counseling and institutional maintenance), inadequate support services, and inadequate funds.

A number of state and local studies have attempted to evaluate the status of vocational education for incarcerated youth. For example, Davidson (1977) studied juvenile correctional institutions in the state of North Carolina and found that 90 percent of the inmates in both adult

and juvenile populations desired vocational education, yet only 9 percent actually received institutionally based instruction. Thirty-four percent of the population could not enroll in vocational education programs due to conflicts with work schedules.

In an investigation of thirteen juvenile institutions in the state of Illinois, Anderson (1977) concluded that vocational education programs for juveniles were largely uncoordinated or nonexistent. Anderson suggested that a complete and systematic procedure from intake to placement was necessary to improve services.

The number of juvenile offenders in correctional institutions is declining despite political pressure in some states to place more youthful offenders in institutions (Wilson 1978). Wilson found that populations of juveniles in secure and semisecure facilities had dropped from 34,000 in 1965 to 26,000 in 1978. All but seven states showed declines during the reporting period.

Wilson suggests that a large part of the reduction has been due to "community corrections" (community-based programs for juvenile offenders), which enrolled approximately 23 percent of the youths committed to the juvenile authority during the 1970s. This followed a major effort on the part of the U. S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to provide support for deinstitutionalizing (placing in programs outside institutions) status offenders (a status offense is one committed by a juvenile which, if committed by an adult, is not a criminal offense, e.g. truancy).

Although rehabilitation has been the stated goal of juvenile corrections, evaluations indicate that correctional institutions for juveniles are not achieving this goal. Recent efforts to provide community-based programming for these youth appear to have great potential, as the youthful offenders can then participate in vocational programs in local public or alternative schools.

Mentally Handicapped Offenders

Most efforts to determine the number of mentally handicapped individuals in corrections rely on I.Q. test scores. In a national survey of adult prisons, Brown and Courtless (1967) defined the mentally retarded offender as one whose score on an I.Q. test was less than 70. They determined that about 10 percent of the total inmate population was mentally retarded. Using an I.Q. score of 84 or below as the criterion, the South Carolina Department of Corrections (1968) found 27 percent of inmates in that state under the age of twenty-one to be retarded. Harbach (1975) reviewed the I.Q. scores of 4,738 adult inmates in Georgia. Using an I.Q. score of 70 or below as the criterion, he classified 29 percent of the inmate population as retarded.

The use of I.Q. scores as a basis for classification is quite significant, as the placement of inmates in vocational education programs is based on these scores. Abram and Schroeder (1977) found that a minimum I.Q. score of 68.5 is required for placement into vocational education programs in 33 percent of the 96 juvenile institutions they surveyed, and that a minimum I.Q. score of 86.5 is required for enrollment in vocational education programs in 39 percent of the 275 adult institutions surveyed.

Equally important is the fact that standardized achievement tests are used to make placement decisions in vocational education programs in many adult and juvenile institutions. The minimum achievement level for enrollment in vocational education programs is approximately sixth grade for juveniles and seventh grade for adults in both reading and math.

While up to 30 percent of inmate populations have been classified as mentally handicapped, only a few attempts have been made to determine the availability of vocational education programs for these inmates. Brown and Courtless (1967) found that more than half of the surveyed institutions offered no specialized programs for mentally handicapped inmates. They found that neither vocational education nor special education classes were offered in half of the institutions. Haskins and Friel (1973) surveyed thirty-nine institutions and found that 28 percent offered vocational education programs for mentally handicapped inmates. More recently, Abram and Schroeder (1977) found that vocational education was provided for mentally retarded youth at 48.4 percent of the juvenile corrections institutions but at only 20 percent of the adult institutions that they surveyed.

Many mentally handicapped offenders are systematically excluded from vocational education programs in correctional institutions as a result of their scores on standardized tests. Moreover, utilization of standardized tests of achievement and intelligence in making educational placement decisions raises serious methodological considerations which are only recently beginning to be addressed in the literature. Few if any standardized tests have been statistically normed for prison populations. This fact renders the use of such tests questionable, at best, particularly for minority groups in prison populations (Bezag and Green 1981). If such tests are to be used by correctional educators for placement decisions, they should develop norms for their special population, as is encouraged by most standardized testing manuals.

Evaluation of Vocational Education Programs

One definition of evaluation of vocational education programs in correctional institutions is that "Evaluation is a way to compare questions about the outcome we hoped would occur from the vocational education program with results that actually occurred because of inmates' participation in the vocational education program" (Halasz and Behm 1982, p. 11).

A number of studies have assessed the effectiveness of vocational education in corrections (Abram and Schroeder 1977; Bell et al. 1977b; Dell'Apa 1973; *Education Commission* 1976; Jones 1977) including several state-level studies (Abram and Wheatley 1977; Anderson 1977; Atteberry and Allen 1978; Davidson 1977). For the most part, these studies have identified barriers to effective program administration and delivery, as well as needed changes. In general, they do not investigate the relationship between vocational education and the economic success of former inmates. They are, however, widely cited and form the basis for many decisions about prison reform.

Bell and his associates (1977b) observe that the lack of rigorous and systematic program evaluation appears to be the single most important issue affecting all institutionally based correctional education programs. They report that only 55 percent of the institutions surveyed (146 adult facilities) evaluate their vocational education programs. Only rarely are long-term outcomes such as postprogram follow-up (6 percent), postrelease follow-up (12 percent), or recidivism (12 percent) studied. The authors concluded that these data indicate confusion and ambiguity about the purpose, meaning, and content of program evaluation and that the quality, effectiveness, and purpose of most evaluations is, "at best, questionable and, at worst meaningless" (p. 94).

A few efforts have been undertaken to study the effects of vocational education on the postrelease success of inmates. Lipton, Martinson, and Wilks (1975) reviewed the empirical research on the relationship between both institutionally based and community-based vocational education programs and recidivism. Five studies were identified, two of youth programs and three of adult.

Two of these studies, one of an institutionally based program and one of a community-based youth program, found that vocational education was provided along with counseling and academic instruction. While these two studies did not establish a significant relationship between vocational education and recidivism rates, they did offer evidence that the provision of vocational education along with other support services is more effective in reducing recidivism than the provision of vocational education alone.

The three studies of adult programs produced similar results. No significant relationship between inmate participation in vocational education and recidivism rates was found. The five studies collectively suggest, however, that when inmates secure employment in a vocation for which they are trained, recidivism rates decrease. The data also suggest that inmate work assignments in semiskilled maintenance or industry jobs result in lower recivism rates than those in unskilled jobs.

A 1971 study (Garay et al. 1971) investigated the effects of vocational education on recidivism among convicted adult felons in the state of Washington. In the eighteen-month study, it was found that inmates who had completed vocational education programs had lower recidivism rates than those who did not.

Whitson and his associates (1975) studied eighty-seven former Texas Department of Corrections inmates. They selected an experimental group composed of two subgroups, (1) graduates of a Windham (Texas) School District vocational education program, and (2) graduates of postsecondary vocational education programs. The control group was composed of inmates who did not participate in vocational education during incarceration. The researchers found the unemployment rate among the control group to be about double that of either of the experimental subgroups.

Abram and Wheatley (1977) interviewed 152 former juvenile inmates and thirty-three adults who had participated in vocational education while incarcerated in Ohio. Sixty percent were unemployed. Seventy-five percent of those who were employed expressed dissatisfaction with their employment. Only 12 percent of those employed had jobs related to their skill area.

The most recent and perhaps most comprehensive assessment of the quality of vocational education programs in state prisons was conducted by Rice, Poe, Hawes, and Nerden (1980). The purpose of this study was to discern, analyze, describe, and disseminate information about the critical variables that lead to the reduction of recidivism, increased in-program success, and increased postrelease employment of adults in nine state prison vocational education programs (Rice et al. 1980). Exemplary programs were defined as those having acceptable success rates on two of three measures. These are:

1. postrelease employment rates of at least 60 percent,
2. recidivism rates of less than 30 percent, and
3. in-program success rates of at least 70 percent.

Ten program variables were found to account for the particular success of vocational programs in correctional institutions. These are (1) administration, (2) coordination and cooperation, (3) curriculum and instruction, (4) facilities and equipment, (5) funding, (6) placement and follow-up, (7) planning, (8) policy, (9) staffing, and (10) support services. The characteristics found to account for success in each of these variables are listed in table 1.

TABLE 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF VARIABLES OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS IN ADULT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Variable	Characteristics
• Administration	• Trained educators • Decentralized decision making • Focus on public relations and fund raising • Well-defined relationships and procedures • History of leadership by one individual
• Coordination and Cooperation	• Mechanisms to maintain a high level of contact and communication with State agencies, local agencies, and other components of the institution
• Curriculum and Instruction	• Open-entry, open exit formats • Competency-based, modularized, self-paced materials • Real-life work and hands-on training experiences • Extensive program evaluation
• Facilities and Equipment	• Designated areas used specifically and exclusively for vocational education
• Funding	• Various sources
• Placement and Followup	• Systematic procedures • Emphasis on employer contact
• Planning	• Systematic programmatic and instructional planning procedures
• Policy	• Formal policy defining program role and objectives
• Staffing	• Team approach • Emphasis on personal relationship with students • Experienced tradespersons certified by the state education agency • Staff development programs
• Support Services	• Counseling • Recreational programs • General education programs • Psychological services

SOURCE: Adapted from Rice et al. 1980.

Policymakers and program planners in corrections departments will find knowledge of these critical variables important to their efforts to provide high-quality vocational education programming for the inmates of correctional facilities. These data provide them with an unusual opportunity to improve programs by replicating the characteristics of the nine exemplary programs studied.

Two problems are associated with drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of vocational education research. First, there are few research studies from which to draw conclusions. Second, most of the research was not rigorously designed.

The research necessary to demonstrate program effectiveness is conspicuously absent. The majority of existing research is descriptive rather than experimental or evaluative. Experimental or quasi-experimental research often has less than rigorous methodological design. In addition, few state agencies evaluate programs on a regular and continuing basis. The empirical evidence necessary to support the contention that the provision of vocational education in correctional institutions alters criminal behavior is lacking. If such evidence is to be obtained, a higher priority must be placed on program evaluation. It appears that awareness of this need is increasing.

> Corrections educators have become increasingly aware of the need to obtain credible information for accountability and improvement of vocational education programs. Vocational education is often viewed as an intervention as it provides inmates with occupational skills that will hopefully deter their return to prison. However, there are other outcomes that are often used in the evaluation of these programs such as employability skills, career development, and self-esteem. Regardless of the outcomes selected, corrections educators need information for improving the quality of their vocational education programs. (Halasz and Behm 1982, p. ix)

THE FUTURE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN CORRECTIONS

Vocational education provides a powerful force for promoting change in inmates, enhancing their chances of obtaining jobs upon release, and encouraging them to become productive members of society (National Advisory Council 1981). However, significant barriers must be overcome before vocational education can successfully demonstrate its rehabilitative potential. A discussion of some of these barriers follows.

Status

In spite of the documented need for skill training among the prison population and the fact that employment and success in our society are directly related, vocational education remains a low priority for correctional administrations (National Advisory Council 1981; Comptroller General 1979). Conrad (1979) contends that corrections is undergoing a period of "penalogical pessimism," characterized by a lack of commitment to traditional rehabilitation programs such as vocational education. As the prison population grows, increased emphasis is placed on building prisons to relieve overcrowding and on maintaining security within overcrowded institutions.

The success of vocational education programs in corrections is often measured, at least in part, by the subsequent economic success of participants. The factors that affect the employability of former inmates are complex but their ability to obtain employment is seen as critical to rehabilitation. It is generally believed that "the greatest aid to rehabilitation and the reduction of recidivism is education, particularly vocational education" (Rice et al. 1980, p. 1).

Barriers to Employment

Released offenders encounter many barriers to employment even after completing vocational education programs (Hunt, Bowers, and Miller 1974). A 1976 report by the Education Commission of the States warned that to focus on better vocational education without paying attention to the obstacles faced by offenders in obtaining jobs would be foolish. Training programs cannot be effective unless the unjust employment restrictions and civil disabilities faced by offenders are removed (Education Commission of the States 1976).

As an example of the magnitude of this problem, the former Clearinghouse on Offender Employment reported that in 1972 more than 2,000 laws had a negative effect on employment opportunites for persons with criminal records. Gilman (1979) described the employment barriers as a patchwork of laws and regulations that prevent offenders from exercising specific rights or from working in specific occupations. Gilman commended the American Bar Association and the American Civil Liberties Union (National Prison Project) for their efforts to reduce barriers to the employment of released offenders. He concluded that the legal barriers to employment of offenders are slowly disappearing. Barriers to employment, however, still remain a major obstacle for those released from prison.

Funding

Leaders in the corrections field contend that vocational education and other rehabilitation programs have not failed but rather have never had sufficient resources to be effectively implemented (Breed 1981). Insufficient funding and a lack of access to federal funds available to other vocational programs are significant obstacles to the provision of vocational education programs in corrections. A very small percentage of state corrections appropriations are allocated to vocational education programs. In addition, correctional administrators have inadequate information about available state and federal grant monies. Some are hesitant to accept grant monies because of accompanying regulations and the temporary nature of such funding. Lack of funding remains a formidable barrier to the provision of effective vocational education programs in corrections.

National Efforts to Improve the Status of Vocational Education in Corrections

Correctional educators remain committed to the notion that vocational education can be effective if funding and status are improved. A number of national initiatives have the apparent potential to accomplish this.

Standards and Accreditation

Many lists of standards and goals have been developed for the field of corrections. Allison (1979) concludes that "Corrections is impoverished in many respects, but there is one thing the field has in lavish abundance . . . standards, goals, and proposals on reforming itself" (p. 54).

The development of standards for prisons can be traced back to 1870 when the "Declaration of Principles," a philosophical charter of the American Prison Association (now the American Correctional Association), was issued. Subsequently, commissions, task forces, and advisory committees have developed myriad standards, goals, and guidelines intended to assist correctional administrators in improving programs. The need for vocational training in correctional institutions has been supported by the following:

- The National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement (Wickersham Commission)—1931
- The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice—1967
- The Joint Commission of Correctional Manpower and Training—1969
- The President's Task Force on Prisoner Rehabilitation—1970
- The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals—1973

In 1977, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education at The Ohio State University developed the first standards specific to vocational education in corrections (Schroeder et al. 1977). These guidelines are designed to aid correctional personnel in developing effective vocational education programs. They list the essential elements of successful vocational education programs organized into the areas of curriculum, staff, students,

organization and administration, physical plant, equipment, and supplies. While these standards have been widely disseminated, no information is available regarding their impact on vocational education in corrections.

Recent efforts to link the development of standards to accreditation of correctional agencies are generating new optimism. In 1974, the American Correctional Association initiated a major effort to improve practices in correctional agencies and institutions through standards identified by correctional professionals themselves. As a result, two entities have emerged as powerful forces for correctional reform. The first of these, the Committee on Standards and Accreditation, has the task of continually revising the standards. The second, the Commission of Accreditation for Corrections, is charged with evaluating and accrediting existing institutions and agencies.

The *Manual of Standards for Adult Long Range Institutions* (Commission on Accreditation 1977) lists sixteen standards under which educational and vocational education programs are evaluated. Of these, eight are specific to vocational education. Examples of the standards follow:

> *Standard 4395* Educational and vocational training opportunities are available to all inmates except where there is substantial evidence to justify otherwise.
>
> *Standard 4396* Educational and vocational counseling are provided so that inmates are placed in that phase of an educational or vocational program most suited to their needs and abilities.
>
> *Standard 4398* There is an annual evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the educational and vocational training programs against stated performance objectives.
>
> *Standard 4406* Vocational training programs are integrated with academic programs and are relevant to the vocational needs of inmates and to employment opportunities in the community.
>
> *Standard 4407* Vocational instructors are licensed or certified by the state or jurisdiction in which the institution is located.
>
> *Standard 4408* The institution uses community resources in the vocational training programs. (pp. 76-78)

In addition, standards relating to vocational education are found in the section entitled Inmate Work Programs. Examples of the relevant standards include the following:

> *Standard 4388* An effort is made to structure the inmate work day to approximate the work day in the community.
>
> *Standard 4389* The inmate training and work programs utilize the advice and assistance of labor, business, and industrial organizations. (p. 75)

Similar standards for vocational training and work assignments are contained in the *Manual of Standards for Juvenile Training Schools and Services* (Commission on Accreditation 1979), the *Manual of Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities* (Commission on Accreditation 1977), and the *Manual of Standards for Juvenile Detention Facilities and Services* (Commission on Accreditation 1979). Standards relating to vocational education programs from the last document follow.

Standard 9396 There is a system for ensuring that the education program continues to meet the needs of the population.

Standard 9397 The educational program is supported by specialized equipment, which meets minimum state education standards.

Standard 9399 Formal educational and vocational programs have a ratio of one teacher for every fifteen students.

Standard 9400 Written policy and procedure provide that each resident is assessed in terms of academic, vocational and personal needs.

Standard 9403 Educational and vocational training opportunities are available to all residents except where there is substantial evidence to justify otherwise.

Standard 9404 Provision is made to meet the educational and vocational needs of residents who require special placement because of physical, mental or emotional handicaps or learning disabilities.

Standard 9405 Educational and vocational counseling are provided so that residents are placed in that phase of an educational or vocational program most suited to their needs and abilities.

Standard 9406 The educational program allows for flexible scheduling that permits residents to enter at any time and to proceed at their own learning pace.

Standard 9407 Pre-vocational training programs are integrated with academic programs and are relevant to the vocational needs of the residents and to employment opportunities in the community.

Standard 9410 The facility uses community educational and vocational programs for selected residents.

Standard 9411 There is an annual evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the educational and vocational training programs against stated performance objectives.

Standard 9412 There is a system whereby the educational and vocational training programs are assessed against stated objectives by qualified individuals, professional groups and trade associations; this assessment is done at least every three years. (pp. 80-83)

A second effort to develop comprehensive standards was recently initiated by the United States Department of Justice. The resulting volume, *Federal Standards for Prisons and Jails* (U. S. Department of Justice 1981a), contains standards in the area of vocational education. In fact, the standards in that volume very closely parallel those developed by the Committee on Standards and Accreditation.

The impact of these recent efforts to develop standards and to accredit agencies and institutions has surpassed the most optimistic view of scholars in the field. More than six hundred agencies or institutions are involved in the accreditation process. More than forty states are involved with the standards and accreditation project at some level, and twenty-six states are seeking accreditation for their adult correctional facilities.

Corrections Program in the U. S. Department of Education

The U. S. Department of Education, in 1980, established a Corrections Program in the Office of Special Programs of the Office of Vocational and Adult Education. This program is jointly sponsored by the National Institute of Corrections, U. S. Department of Justice, and the U. S. Department of Education.

The mission of the program is to provide national leadership, coordination, technical assistance, and advocacy in correctional education. Technical assistance is provided to state and local jurisdictions for the development, expansion, and improvement of educational programs for both juvenile and adult offenders.

According to a brochure entitled "Corrections Program" (n.d.), the following objectives have been established:

- To coordinate existing Department of Education funding programs which could benefit corrections
- To coordinate Department of Education programs with relevant programs in other federal agencies
- To link corrections with existing mandated resources currently being underutilized by facilitating coordination among correctional agencies and state and local agencies channeling federal funds
- To facilitate linkages between correctional education and other educational programs and systems
- To facilitate better access for corrections to available skills packages and curricula
- To provide technical assistance in all areas pertaining to correctional education
- To promote better training for correctional teachers
- To promote standards for correctional education
- To promote increased research in correctional education
- To increase public support for correctional education by increasing public awareness of and sensitivity to the educational needs of offenders
- To serve as an information base in terms of federal legislation, rules, regulations, and guidelines pertaining to correctional education
- To disseminate information about relevant, successful, replicable programs and service delivery models
- To maintain a directory of currently available funding programs for correctional education and training

The potential for improved educational programs for offenders as a result of the impetus provided by the Corrections Program is encouraging. The objectives of the program clearly address many of the previously stated needs of correctional education programs.

Legislative Initiatives

Since 1979, the Senate of the United States has been considering Senate Bill 1373 (Federal Correctional Assistance Act), an effort to authorize the Commissioner of Education to provide financial assistance to states for the purpose of expanding educational programs in juvenile and adult correctional institutions. This legislation has gained support as crime and recidivism rates have continued to rise. Changes in the Vocational Education Admendments of 1976 (P.L. 94-482) to ensure correctional agencies eligibility for funding remains an apparent possibility. Legislation to provide for loans to encourage private industry to employ inmates is another promising development.

The recommendation of the Attorney General's Task Force on Violent Crime, released in August 1981, affirmed the need for vocational education programs in corrections. While emphasis was placed on removing offenders from society, the Task Force suggested that the United States attorney general recognize the need for prisons to rehabilitate as well as incarcerate. It was recommended that the attorney general propose changes in the Vocational Education Amendments and other applicable statutes to provide for the establishment of educational and vocational education programs in corrections. The task force report specifically recommended the involvement of the private sector in correctional industries and community work projects, as well as the expansion of educational and vocational education opportunities for all inmates.

Summary

A number of recent national efforts have focused increased attention on the need to provide adequate vocational education to persons incarcerated in our nation's correctional institutions. The barriers to effective vocational education programs are formidable, but not insurmountable. Attempts to develop standards, accredit institutions, and effect legislative changes that will provide increased funding and flexibility have spurred new optimism about the future of vocational education in corrections.

If this optimism is to become reality, concerned and responsible leadership must be forthcoming. A review of the literature and the experience of practitioners in corrections lead to the conclusion that the key to an effective future for vocational education in corrections is contigent upon the following three critical areas:

- Increased and improved research and evaluation
- Increased community involvement and interagency cooperation at all levels
- Leadership from professional organizations and federal and state governmental agencies

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